

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 IO-14 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-16 EA-11 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 SAJ-01 ACDA-19

OMB-01 DRC-01 /189 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4129

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 12329

GENEVA FOR MEPC DELEGATION

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, UR, UK, XF

SUBJECT: ANGLO-SOVIET CONSULTATIONS ON MIDDLE EAST

SUMMARY: CONSULTATIONS PRODUCED NO SURPRISES. SOVIETS
CRITICIZED PIECEMEAL APPROACH TO ARAB-ISRAELI SETTLEMENT
BUT DID NOT SAY THEY OPPOSED IT. THEY AGAIN URGED POST-
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OCTOBER RETURN TO GENEVA. THEY INDICATED SUPPORT FOR
PLO MOVES IN UNGA, WHILE BEING CAREFUL NOT TO CLOSE OFF

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS FOR THEMSELVES. THEY DENIED THEY SUPPORTED SYRIAN BELLICOSITY BUT INDICATED CONCERN THAT SYRIANS MAY INDEED RESORT TO WAR. (HOWEVER, BRITISH IN DAMASCUS ESTIMATE SYRIAN RECOURSE TO MILITARY OPTION IS UNLIKELY BEFORE SPRING.) SOVIETS SAID THEY ARE UNDECIDED ON UNDOF RENEWAL AND WILL NOT CONSIDER RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL AS LONG AS ISRAEL EXPLOITS DOMESTIC SOVIET ISSUES. OTHER SUBJECTS WILL BE REPORTED SEPARATELY. END SUMMARY.

1. FCO ASSISTANT UNDERSECRETARY WEIR PROVIDED US FOLLOWING RUNDOWN OF HIS MID-SEPTEMBER CONVERSATIONS IN MOSCOW, PRIOR TO DEPARTING FOR UNGA WITH FONSEC CALLAGHAN THIS WEEKEND. MAIN CONVERSATION WAS WITH MFA NEAR EAST DIVISION CHIEF SYTENKO (PYRLIN AND OTHERS SITTING IN).

2. ME NEGOTIATIONS. SYTENKO SAID TIME IS NOT ON ISRAEL'S SIDE AND HINTED, BUT ONLY FAINTLY (AND FOR TACTICAL PURPOSES, WEIR BELIEVES) THAT SYRIA, SUPPORTED BY USSR, MAY HAVE TO CONSIDER AIMING AT ROLLBACK OF ISRAEL TO 1947 FRONTIERS. SYTENKO ALSO TERMED STEP-BY-STEP SETTLEMENT APPROACH AS DANGEROUS SINCE ISRAEL IN POSITION TO EXTRACT CONCESSIONS FOR EVERY PIECE OF TERRITORY IT RETURNS. HOWEVER, HE WAS CAREFUL NOT TO SAY USSR OPPOSES THIS APPROACH. SYTENKO SAID GENEVA IS BEST VENUE, WITH WORKING GROUPS TO WORK ON EACH PROBLEM. AGREED THIS SHOULD BE AFTER OCTOBER ARAB SUMMIT.

3. PLO. SOVIETS ARE URGING MODERATION ON PLO, TO AVOID PLAYING INTO EXTREMISTS' HANDS. HOWEVER, ARABS CANNOT IGNORE RESOLUTIONS OF ALGIERS AND LAHORE CONFERENCES. SYTENKO DID NOT ADMIT BACKSTAGE SOVIET ROLE BEHIND PLO MOVE IN UN, BUT HE SAID IT WAS HIGH TIME FOR A POLITICAL DEBATE IN UN ON ISSUE OF PALESTINE. WHY SHOULD PALESTINIANS BE DENIED SELF-DETERMINATION? HOWEVER, USSR WILL LEAVE DECISIONS ON TIMING UP TO THE ARABS THEMSELVES. SYTENKO AGREED UNGA ITEM SHOULD BE HANDLED SO AS NOT TO COMPLICATE KISSINGER DISCUSSIONS. IN THIS REGARD, WEIR NOTED PODGORNYY STATEMENT WHICH CAME AFTER WEIR'S CONSULTATIONS, SPOKE OF PALESTINIAN NATIONAL RIGHTS TO SELF-
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DETERMINATION AND STATEHOOD "IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER."
THIS LEAVES SOME OPTIONS OPEN FOR SOVIETS.

4. SYRIANS. SYTENKO GOT HOT UNDER THE COLLAR AT IMPLICATIONS IN FOREIGN PRESS THAT USSR ENCOURAGING SYRIAN BELLICOSITY (PER MOSCOW 14255). SYTENKO GAVE IMPRESSION, IN FACT, THAT HE IS GENUINELY WORRIED SYRIANS MAY GET OUT OF HAND. WEIR COMMENTS THIS MAY HAVE ALSO BEEN TACTICAL. HE NOTES BRITISH AMBASSADOR IN DAMASCUS HAS SENT IN ESTIMATE THAT, WHILE SYRIANS MAY PERHAPS ENGAGE

IN SOME SKIRMISHING OVER WINTER, THEY ARE UNLIKELY TO RESORT TO MILITARY OPTION BEFORE SPRING. AMBASSADOR FEELS SYRIANS WILL NEED TIME TO TRAIN ON NEW EQUIPMENT, AS WELL AS LINE UP SUPPORT FROM OTHER ARAB STATES.

5. UNDOF RENEWAL. SYTENKO SAID SOVIETS HAVE NOT DECIDED THEIR POSITION ON UNDOF RENEWAL IN NOVEMBER. WEIR TOLD HIM NON-RENEWAL WOULD BE DISASTROUS.

6. RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. SYTENKO SAID RENEWAL OF RELATIONS IS OUT OF THE QUESTION AS LONG AS ISRAEL IS EXPLOITING DOMESTIC PRESSURES IN USSR (I.E. JEWISH EMIGRATION).

7. UN AND CYPRUS. IN BRIEF DISCUSSION ON UNSC CONSIDERATION OF CYPRUS ITEM WITH UN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR ISRAELIAN, WEIR WAS LEFT WITH FEELING UK HAD BEEN RIGHT IN PRESSING ISSUE SO AS TO FORCE SOVIET VETO, AND SUBSEQUENT HUMILIATING REVERSAL. ISRAELIAN'S WRATH ON THIS POINT ONLY EMPHASIZED EFFECTIVENESS OF BRITISH ACTION.

8. OTHER ASPECTS OF CONSULTATIONS (ON ECONOMIC MATTERS, NPT, MBFR, ETC.) WILL BE REPORTED SEPARATELY.

9. WEIR'S FINAL COMMENT TO US WAS THAT SUCH OCCASIONS AT LEAST GAVE BRITISH OPPORTUNITY TO QUESTION SOVIETS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES AND GET SOME SORT OF ANSWER. HE WAS NOT SURE, HOWEVER, IF FCO WOULD WANT TO MAKE THESE CONSULTATIONS REGULAR ANNUAL AFFAIRS.

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